

A better way to travel,
today and tomorrow

TAB 4 PUBLIC SUPPORT

4.a Benefits of Dulles SmartLink

Identify who will benefit from the project, how they will benefit and how the project will benefit the overall transportation system.

The enhancements to the Dulles Toll Road (DTR) planned by Dulles SmartLink, and the associated opportunity for the Commonwealth to have its share of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project funded, will provide significant benefits to Northern Virginia and its overall transportation system. These benefits include:

- Additional transportation choices
- Safety improvements at toll collection points
- Reduced congestion
- Enhanced levels of service
- Benefits for land use planning and management
- Improved potential for economic growth and standard of living in the corridor
- Improved quality of life for residents, with a faster commute and less stressful driving experience
- Improved employee productivity

Funding for the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project

Dulles SmartLink recognizes that the use of the proceeds, available to the Commonwealth upon the execution of a Comprehensive Agreement, is a matter for the elected officials and policymakers (including the Commonwealth Transportation Board) of the Commonwealth. Dulles SmartLink has carefully examined indicators of public opinion about the need and appropriateness of Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, conferred with many Commonwealth and local elected officials and civic leaders, and concluded that – in all likelihood – the funds made available by reason of our proposal will be (and should be) used to provide the funds needed for the Commonwealth’s and Fairfax County’s shares of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. Accordingly, analysis conducted for the Dulles SmartLink proposal assumes that the use of the proceeds generated to the Commonwealth will be for funding of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project.

Tab 4 Public Support

4.a Benefits of Dulles SmartLink

Benefits to the Overall Transportation System

Dulles SmartLink, along with the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, will significantly reduce congestion and help manage traffic flow across many elements of the transportation network in Northern Virginia.

As well as the positive benefits on the DTR itself, other significant traffic routes that could benefit include:

- Dulles Airport Access Highway (DAAH)
- Washington Dulles International Airport entrance
- Capital Beltway, including the new HOT lanes proposed for this road
- Route 28, bringing a greater return on investment for the ongoing public-private development
- Various local and feeder roads, such as Route 7 and the Fairfax County Parkway

Two-thirds of Dulles Corridor residents are frustrated with travel delays.

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Given that two-thirds of residents in the Dulles Corridor are frustrated with the travel delays they experience on their most frequent trips, Dulles SmartLink has the potential to deliver significant benefit to local residents and hence improve the relationship between local governments and constituents. Almost 90 percent of commuters cite traffic as the reason for their frustration with travel, so decisive measures to address this will attract broad public support (NVTA survey, July 2005).

Funding of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project is a significant policy initiative facing the affected federal, Commonwealth, and local regulatory bodies.

Completion of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project will assist the transportation system by:

- Taking more cars off local roads, by providing a high-quality, reliable transit alternative
- Increasing the transportation capacity of the corridor
- Providing better access to activity centers such as Tysons Corner, Reston, and Herndon
- Improving access to the Washington Dulles International Airport, reducing the need for transport of airline passengers and employees by road
- Supporting creation of pedestrian and Transit Oriented Development in the corridor, as identified in county plans, specifically for the Reston area

The Commonwealth of Virginia has performed numerous planning studies over the past 15 years. These studies have recognized that the solution to congestion lies in a multifaceted approach that incorporates a variety of travel modes and strategies. This conclusion is embodied in regional policies dating as far back as the Sub-Regional Plan in the late 1980s and the more recent Northern Virginia 2020 Plan.

These plans propose a combination of highway, rail, bus, and non-motorized facilities and services to address the existing and anticipated travel needs of the region. Moreover, the plans recognize that an increasing need exists to make more efficient use of transportation investments, by emphasizing the movement of people rather than vehicles. They also recognize, however, that no single mode of transportation can realistically serve the multitude of travel patterns in the region. Thus, one of the fundamental elements of these plans is the construction of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project.

Tab 4 Public Support

4.a Benefits of Dulles SmartLink

Benefits to the Commonwealth

Our proposal has been designed to deliver maximum benefit and flexibility to the Commonwealth of Virginia and the local governments in and around the Dulles Corridor.

Benefits to the Commonwealth include:

- Enhancing one of the most significant routes for commuter and business-related traffic in the Washington region
- Reducing the ongoing resource burden on the Commonwealth relating to the operation and maintenance of the DTR
- Freeing up of scarce transportation funds for other critical projects within Virginia
- Improving environmental conditions in the Dulles Corridor, by reducing congestion and encouraging further rail transit use
- Promoting ongoing economic development of the Dulles Corridor, thereby increasing the tax base and building the region's profile as a significant center for business and industry

Large-scale infrastructure investments are proven catalysts for increasing land values.

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Infrastructure investments of the scale of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project and the proposed enhancements to the DTR are proven catalysts for land value increases. The economic multiplier effect on the tax base of Fairfax and Loudoun counties is likely to be significant over the long term.

Benefits to Dulles SmartLink Customers

Existing DTR users will benefit from:

- Congestion relief along the road and leading into the toll plazas
- Enhanced driver information services
- Updated incident management procedures
- Other service-related benefits

Benefits to the Dulles Corridor Communities

More than 70 percent of road users in the DTR and Route 7 area consider completion of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project as either their first or second transportation priority (NVTA research, July 2005). A further 21 percent consider widening of the DTR as one of their top two priorities. Dulles SmartLink's proposal will clearly meet the demands of the local communities.

Tab 4 Public Support

4.a Benefits of Dulles SmartLink

The communities of the Dulles Corridor can anticipate the following benefits from the Dulles SmartLink proposal:

- Reduced travel times
- Reduced congestion
- Improved air quality
- Reduced fuel use
- Improved property values
- Enhanced access to the Washington Dulles International Airport

Business and Industry in the Dulles Corridor

Employers within and beyond the corridor will benefit from the proposed enhancements because employees will have more reliable, improved, and expanded options for commuting. These same positive factors that the project offers for commuters will also improve the efficiency and reliability of other business-related travel. Employees who must travel to conduct business will be able to do so with a higher degree of reliability, resulting in time and cost savings that are currently unavailable. These benefits will be most noticeable for businesses located immediately adjacent to the DTR, although they would also extend throughout Northern Virginia. The employment areas that would derive the greatest benefit from their proximity to, and/or access via, the enhanced DTR are listed in Table 4.a-1.

Table 4.a-1 Employment/Activity Centers by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Employment Center
Fairfax County	Tysons Corner
	Reston
	Herndon
	Vienna
Washington Dulles International Airport	Falls Church
Loudoun County	Sterling
	Lansdowne
	Leesburg

Dulles Airport Users and Workers

The Washington Dulles International Airport serviced 22.9 million passengers in 2004, an increase of 34.9 percent compared to 2003. The airport is also a significant employment generator, with more than 18,000 employees on site each day. It is one of the fastest-growing activity centers in the region with employment projected to grow to 30,000 by 2010. Airport users – whether they are customers or employees – will benefit from the Dulles SmartLink proposal through reduced commuting times and enhanced connections to the nation’s capital and surrounding activity centers. Without the improvements proposed by the Dulles SmartLink and the efficient completion of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, the future growth of the airport may be threatened.

Airport users will benefit from reduced travel times.

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4.b Anticipated Support or Opposition

Identify any anticipated government support or opposition, or general public support or opposition for the project.

The Dulles SmartLink proposal provides residents and businesses of the Dulles Corridor with a transportation and lifestyle benefit at little or no additional direct personal cost. Similarly, the proposal gives the Commonwealth the opportunity to meet significant policy and transportation objectives at no incremental cost to taxpayers. We anticipate strong support for the package of enhancements and funding offered in this proposal.

Dulles SmartLink has consulted with numerous local officials and corridor stakeholders.

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In researching this proposal, our team consulted a variety of local government officials as well as other corridor stakeholders and interested parties. We are aware of the history of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project and the sensitivity that surrounds it. The purpose of these discussions was to listen to local attitudes toward the project in an attempt to address stakeholder concerns.

Discussions were held with local representatives including the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, Fairfax County, and local civic leaders.

4.b.1 Government Support or Opposition

The Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project has been an objective of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for many years. Fairfax and Loudoun counties have consistently supported the initiative as it will enhance the lifestyle, business opportunities, and tax base of both constituencies. We anticipate significant government support, given the proposal's potential to facilitate the delivery of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project and enhance the driving experience on the DTR.

We are committed to working closely with all levels of government to ensure the project meets broad public policy objectives and community needs.

While there are some members of the community, including elected representatives who have publicly stated misgivings about the viability of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, or who prefer alternative proposals, such as Bus Rapid Transit systems, Dulles SmartLink is confident of garnering broad support for our proposal. We will implement a strong stakeholder relations program that will ensure full information and engagement opportunities for all relevant government stakeholders.

Tab 4 Public Support

4.b Anticipated Support or Opposition

4.b.2 Public Support or Opposition

Current Public Opinion

Recent research by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (July 2005) has identified strong support for enhancements to the transportation system in the region (as identified in Tab 4.a).

Relevant findings of the research include:

- Two-thirds of residents are frustrated with the trips they take most often
- 86 percent of those surveyed cite traffic as the key reason for their frustration with travel
- 71 percent of those using Route 7 and the DTR as their major transport route consider extending the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project their highest or second highest transportation priority
- Public transportation is considered extremely important, with 74 percent of those surveyed considering it the most important or second most important transport priority.

These findings would indicate strong public support for the Dulles SmartLink proposal, which combines road enhancements with access to funding for the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project.

Potential Opposition

Dulles SmartLink is committed to extensive community outreach surrounding this proposal. Through this process, we will be able to anticipate and prepare for many of the questions that may be raised, including the associated funding of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. Anticipated concerns may include:

- Environmental and community impacts
- Accommodation of future modes of transportation
- Financing
- Safety
- Economic accessibility

The Dulles SmartLink team acknowledges the public debate about the value of a Concession for the DTR and the potential benefits that can be anticipated from completion of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. However, we are confident that the benefits of the project will be clearly communicated and demonstrated through our comprehensive approach to community outreach over the life of the Concession.

4.c Stakeholder Relations Strategy

Explain the strategy and plans that will be carried out to involve and inform the agencies and the public in areas affected by the project.

Dulles SmartLink is committed to a comprehensive and ongoing public outreach, information, and involvement program throughout the life of the Concession. This approach goes beyond the development of public support for the proposed enhancements and management of impacts during construction. We will ensure that communication with the community is a critical factor in the operation of the road over the life of the Concession.

Our public outreach approach will be guided by one fundamental rule:

Full and open communication and the exchange of ideas with everyone concerned will be maintained throughout the life of the Concession.

We will work with VDOT, MWAA, the Commonwealth, and other local government officials, civic and business organizations, homeowner and commuter groups, and citizens to keep them informed and engaged along every step of the PPTA and NEPA processes, as well as during the planning, design, construction, and operational phases of the project. Dulles SmartLink team members offer significant in-house expertise in community outreach, and this will be supplemented with the appointment of an experienced public relations firm with local knowledge to support these public outreach efforts.

Dulles SmartLink's commitment – full and open communication for the free exchange of ideas.

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4.c.1 Stakeholder Relations Team

The Dulles SmartLink Team has led stakeholder relations activities on complex highway programs and understands how critical it is to maintain stakeholder support. This experience and commitment will ensure the Dulles SmartLink community outreach program receives the appropriate focus.

4.c.2 Stakeholder Relations Approach

Public opinion surveys show significant support along the Dulles Corridor and throughout Northern Virginia for the key elements of the Dulles SmartLink proposal, particularly potential funding for the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. Any project of this magnitude requires significant planning and careful execution of a public information program. The process has already begun with a series of meetings between Dulles SmartLink and key local officials.

We are committed to maintaining an open dialogue with all key stakeholders in the corridor. We will share our conceptual plan and listen to all input regarding transportation priorities in surrounding communities.

Tab 4 Public Support

4.c Stakeholder Relations Strategy

As we present this conceptual proposal to VDOT, we have also delivered it to local government officials throughout the Dulles Corridor. We want to encourage ongoing support from local government officials and citizens throughout the life of the Concession. We recognize that we cannot achieve this objective unless the government and the community also become our true partners in delivering the project. Our program of public outreach is designed to inform, listen, and learn. We will take this approach throughout the entire process.

4.c.3 Community Outreach Approach

Public Information Plan

Dulles SmartLink will take a three-stage approach to delivering its public information plan.

- **Stage 1** – Provision of information about the proposal, designed to foster public support
- **Stage 2** – Provision of information about the enhancements program and the construction staging, to ensure all road users and neighboring communities are aware of changes and impacts as the enhancements are delivered
- **Stage 3** – Provision of information to customers and road users on an ongoing basis over the life of the Concession

Stage 1 – Securing Public Support

Public support for the Dulles SmartLink proposal is a critical element for success. The enhancements are being delivered to benefit the community and will only be successful if they fulfill the promises of both VDOT and Dulles SmartLink, as the Concessionaire.

Dulles SmartLink will develop a comprehensive public information plan to maximize the informed support of the project by the broader community.

A public information plan that maximizes stakeholder support.

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As part of the development of the public information plan, the team will prepare a communications matrix that identifies key stakeholders, their communication needs, the means for communicating with them, and the frequency of communications. We will use a variety of communication strategies during the implementation of the enhancements, from personal contacts to multimedia alternatives. The communications matrix will be used to develop the optimum strategies for reaching each stakeholder group. We have used an extensive suite of communication tools successfully on other highway construction projects, such as the Capital Beltway HOT Lanes Project in Virginia, the ROC 52 Project in Minnesota, the Legacy Parkway Project in Utah, and the SH 130 Highway Project in Texas.

We recognize the importance of giving the public an avenue to express their ideas and seek answers to their questions. We will listen to the concerns raised by the citizens to determine their viewpoints. We will also use this information to develop effective solutions.

The key to the success of the overall public outreach program will be the extent to which each element is coordinated with the other elements. This coordination will be delivered by a professional communications team that can work within the program and provide day-to-day direction.

Tab 4 Public Support

4.c Stakeholder Relations Strategy

Stage 2 – Communicating During Delivery of the Enhancements

Communication with the public will be a key element in the successful planning and construction of the project. The mitigation of adverse impacts on communities and businesses along the corridor will be a benchmark of this project's success for observers. Dulles SmartLink's community relations efforts will support the distribution of information such as construction activity, work progress, and lane closures to:

- Businesses
- The public
- Public officials
- Governmental agencies
- Other involved stakeholders

Dulles SmartLink will use proven tools to communicate construction activities and progress to stakeholders.

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Our community relations team will use the most effective tools available to communicate real-time information to the public and other directly involved stakeholders. These tools will include:

- Project-specific public opinion research using surveys, focus groups, and online communications tools
- Speakers bureau to make sure that we are available to meet with citizens and local government officials
- Community relations program designed to provide current information to the public and build positive relationships with them, including:
 - Well-publicized interactive Web site and other Web-based techniques, including a permission-based email mailing list
 - Conveniently located project information offices
 - Toll-free information telephone number
 - Public attendance by the key Dulles SmartLink principals at civic meetings
 - Carefully planned press releases at important milestones in the process
- Community leadership program designed to build support for the project among opinion leaders such as local elected officials, business and labor leaders, transit operators, civic leaders, and editorial staff
- Brochures and other publications along with selective use of print, radio, and television advertising to keep the public informed of opportunities to participate in the process

An integrated package of community outreach tools, maximizing stakeholder engagement.

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Stage 3 – Communication over the Life of the Concession

As a Concessionaire committed to the effective long-term management of the DTR we understand the importance of a strong partnership with the local community and all stakeholders over the life of the Concession. Effective communication and consultation underpins the development of such partnerships. Dulles SmartLink will build leading-edge practices into our operations that will ensure we maintain a positive relationship with all stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

Tab 4 Public Support

4.c Stakeholder Relations Strategy

These tools are likely to include:

- An ongoing market research program, so we can respond to changing community expectations and concerns
- Best practice community consultation mechanisms to ensure the community has the opportunity to discuss any changes planned to the road during the Concession
- A highly developed communications program to maintain awareness of how to best access and travel on the DTR, particularly in an open road tolling environment.
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement mechanisms, including a speakers bureau, community leadership program, and regular stakeholder forums
- A sophisticated system for registering and responding to any community issues relating to road operations
- Implementation of a Community Partnership Program, investing in local social and environmental programs of benefit to the communities along the Dulles Corridor.